



PRAHLAD

A TALE OF DEVOTION FROM THE BHAGAWAT PURANA

Vol 537 | ₹70





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PRAHLAD



PRAHLAD WAS THE SON OF THE ASURA, HIRANYAKASHIPU.

HIRANYAKASHIPU'S BROTHER HIRANYAKSHA HAD BEEN SLAIN BY VISHNU.



O BROTHER ASURAS!
I SHALL DESTROY VISHNU
AND KEEP THE OTHER
GODS IN HEAVEN
SUBDUED.



GO TO EARTH, MY BROTHERS,
AND CRUSH ALL THOSE
WHO WORSHIP
VISHNU.



THE ASURAS, BY NATURE FOND
OF OPPRESSING OTHERS, JOYFULLY
OBEYED THE COMMAND.



WHILE THE ASURAS WERE BUSY HARASSING THE DEVOTEES OF VISHNU, THE GODS WENT ABOUT PROTECTING THEM.



THE ASURAS RETURNED TO HIRANYAKASHIPU.

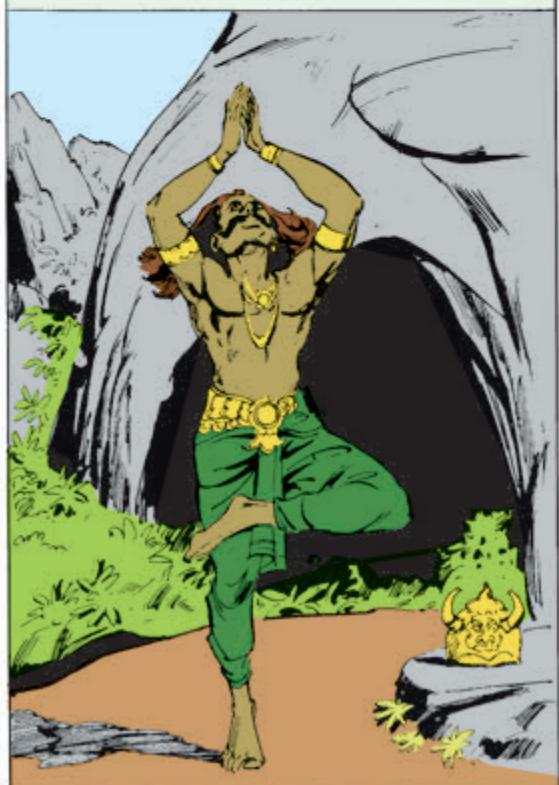
LORD! WE CANNOT CARRY OUT YOUR ORDERS. THE SERVANTS OF VISHNU THWART OUR EFFORTS.



I WILL HAVE TO MATCH MY POWERS TO VISHNU'S TO LORD OVER THE THREE WORLDS!



SO HE BEGAN TO PERFORM SEVERE PENANCES.

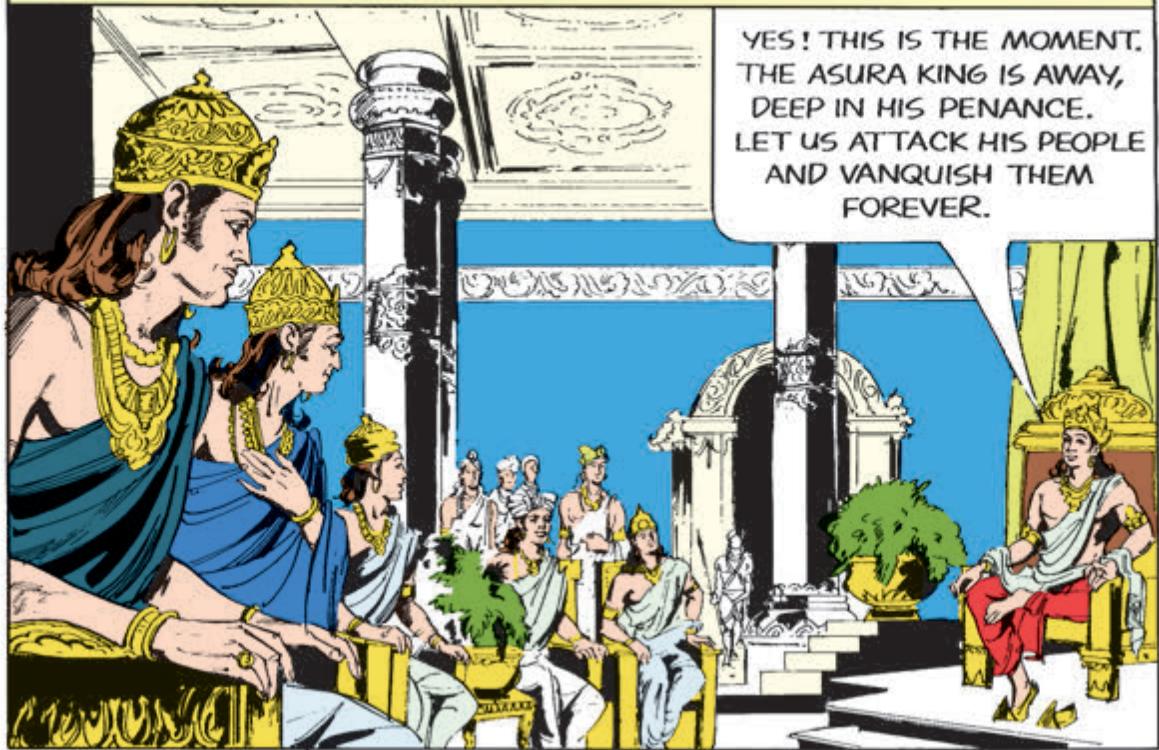


WHEN THE GODS FOUND THAT VISHNU'S DEVOTEES NO LONGER NEEDED THEIR PROTECTION THEY RETURNED TO THEIR HEAVENLY ABODE.



THERE THEY HELD COUNCIL.

YES ! THIS IS THE MOMENT.
THE ASURA KING IS AWAY,
DEEP IN HIS PENANCE.
LET US ATTACK HIS PEOPLE
AND VANQUISH THEM
FOREVER.



THE ASURAS WERE PANIC-
STRICKEN.

THE GODS ARE PLANNING
TO ATTACK US. WITHOUT
OUR LORD WE ARE
HELPLESS.



IN THEIR HASTE AND ANXIETY TO
SAVE THEIR OWN LIVES, THEY DID NOT
BOther TO TAKE EVEN THEIR WIVES,
CATTLE OR MONEY.



THE GODS RANSACKED THE ASURA CITY AND DESTROYED HIRANYAKASHIPU'S PALACE.



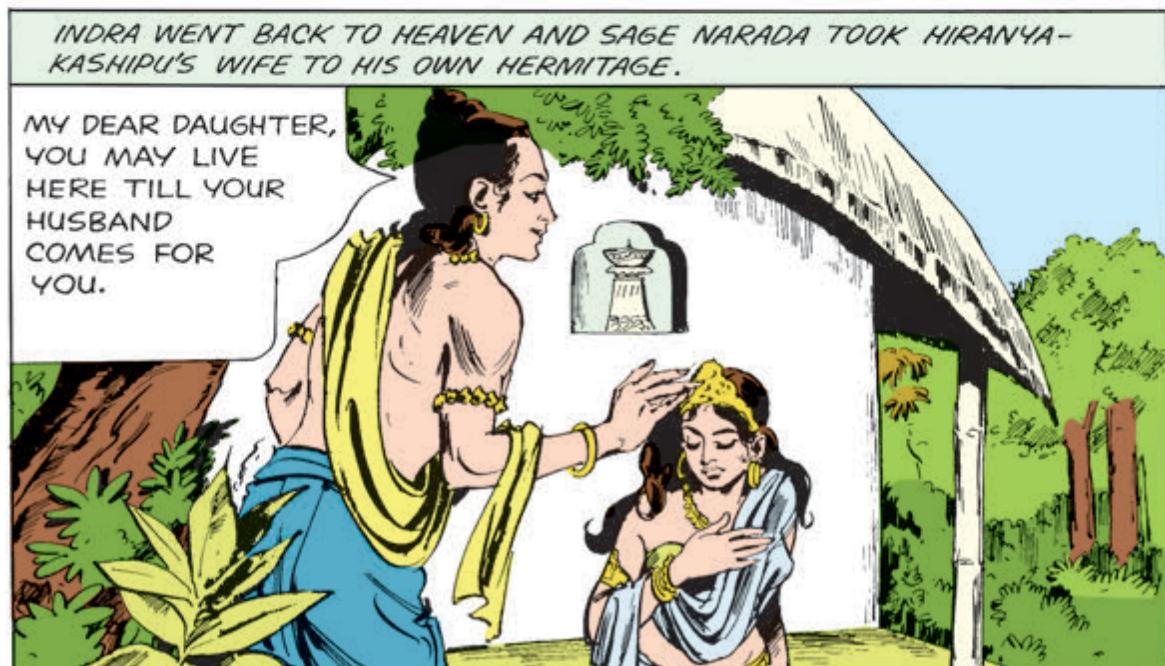
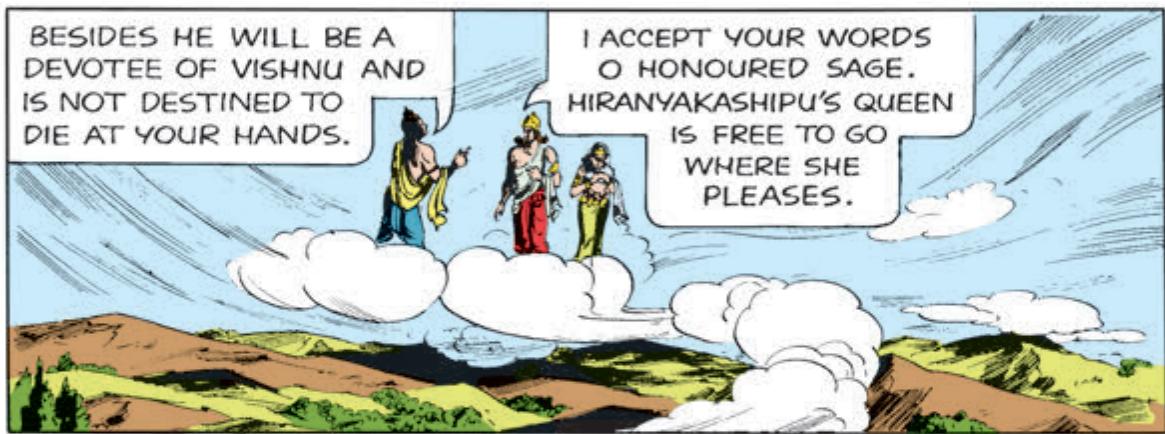
WHILE INDRA WAS TRANSPORTING HER TO HEAVEN, HE MET SAGE NARADA.

WAIT! YOU SHOULD NOT CARRY OFF THIS GUILTY QUEEN, THE CHASTE WIFE OF ANOTHER.



SHE IS GOING TO BE THE MOTHER OF HIRANYAKASHIPU'S SON. SHE SHALL BE WITH ME TILL THE CHILD IS BORN!





SHE LIVED IN THE ASHRAM OF THE GREAT SAGE AND LEARNED ABOUT RELIGION AND THE GLORY OF VISHNU FROM HIM. THE CHILD WITHIN HER, PRAHLAD, TOO, ABSORBED ALL THIS KNOWLEDGE.

VISHNU IS THE SOUL OF ALL CREATED THINGS AND IS PRESENT EVERYWHERE.



IN THE MEANWHILE, WHEN INDRA REACHED HEAVEN—

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

HIRANYAKASHIPU'S AUSTERITIES ARE SCORCHING THE THREE WORLDS.



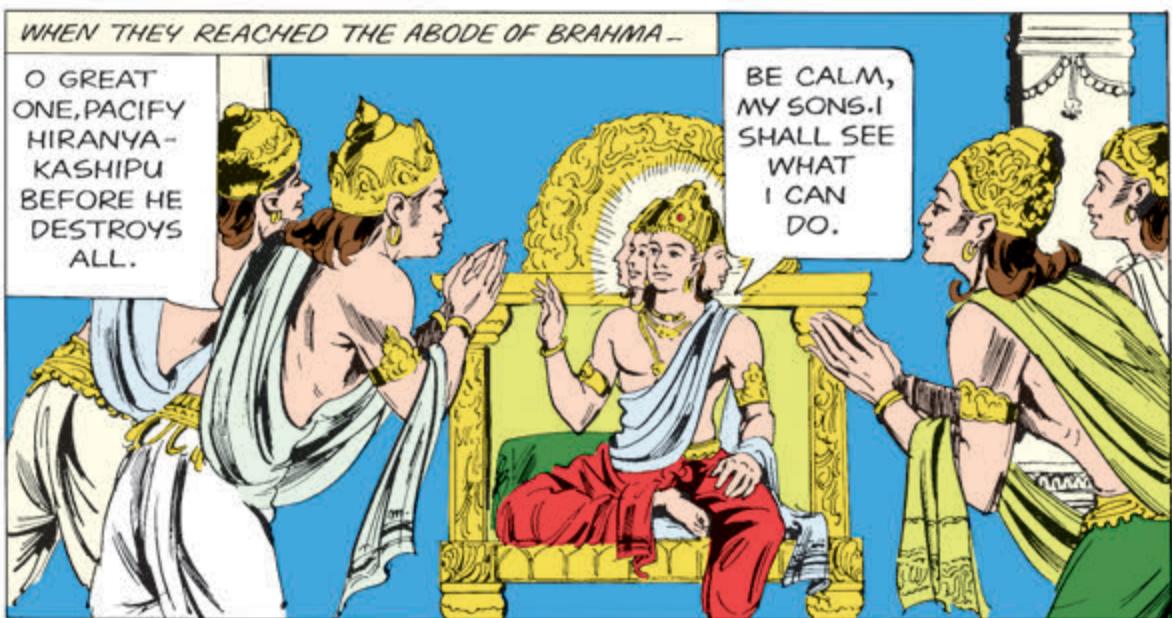
QUICK! LET US GO TO BRAHMA, OUR CREATOR.



WHEN THEY REACHED THE ABODE OF BRAHMA—

O GREAT
ONE, PACIFY
HIRANYA-
KASHIPU
BEFORE HE
DESTROYS
ALL.

BE CALM,
MY SONS. I
SHALL SEE
WHAT
I CAN
DO.

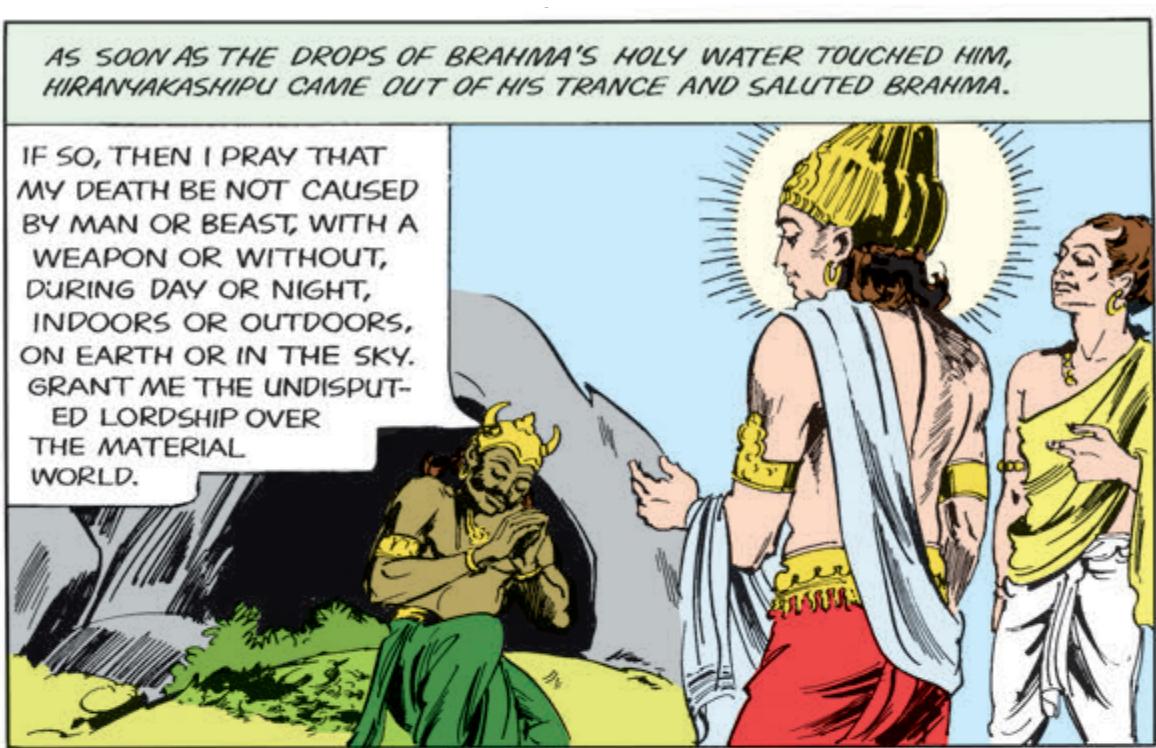


THE MIGHTY BRAHMA, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS CELESTIAL SAGES, WENT TO HIRANYAKASHIPU'S HERMITAGE.

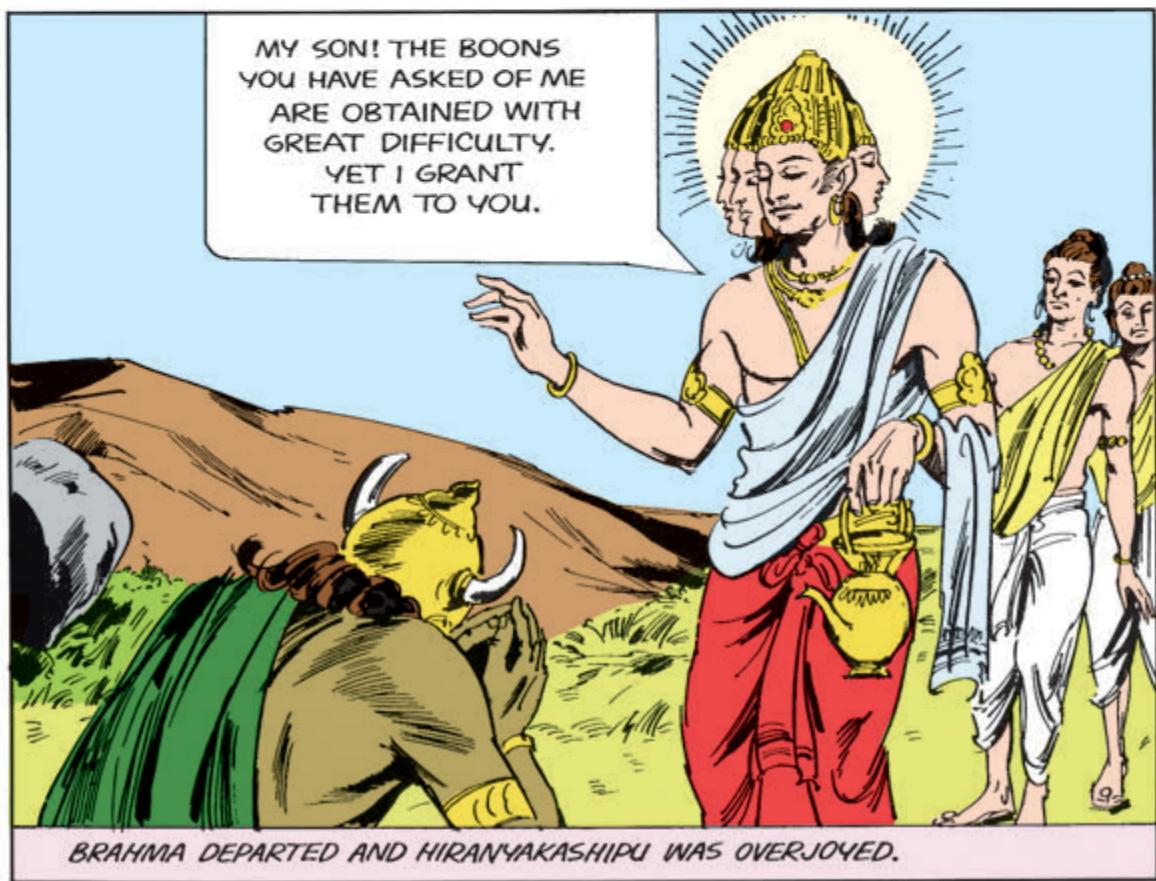


AS SOON AS THE DROPS OF BRAHMA'S HOLY WATER TOUCHED HIM, HIRANYAKASHIPU CAME OUT OF HIS TRANCE AND SALUTED BRAHMA.

IF SO, THEN I PRAY THAT
MY DEATH BE NOT CAUSED
BY MAN OR BEAST, WITH A
WEAPON OR WITHOUT,
DURING DAY OR NIGHT,
INDOORS OR OUTDOORS,
ON EARTH OR IN THE SKY.
GRANT ME THE UNDISPUTED
LORDSHIP OVER
THE MATERIAL
WORLD.



MY SON! THE BOONS
YOU HAVE ASKED OF ME
ARE OBTAINED WITH
GREAT DIFFICULTY.
YET I GRANT
THEM TO YOU.



BRAHMA DEPARTED AND HIRANYAKASHIPU WAS OVERJOYED.

HIRANYAKASHIPU BROUGHT HIS WIFE BACK TO THEIR CITY WHERE PRAHLAD WAS BORN.

MY SUCCESSOR!
YOU SHALL
VANQUISH
THE
GODS.



HIRANYAKASHIPU, WITH HIS NEW POWERS, RENEWED HIS HOSTILITIES AGAINST VISHNU AND HIS FOLLOWERS.



HE DROVE THE GODS OUT OF THEIR ABODE AND ESTABLISHED HIMSELF IN HEAVEN.

THERE IS NONE STRONGER THAN I. I AM THE LORD OF THE THREE WORLDS. I SHALL BE WORSHIPPED AS SUCH!



ALL THE GODS IN HEAVEN EXCEPT BRAHMA, VISHNU AND SHIVA, BEGAN TO WORSHIP THE INTOXICATED HIRANYAKASHIPU.



AT LAST THE OPPRESSED GODS AND DEVOTEES OF VISHNU APPEALED TO HIM.

O LORD, WE SHALL FOREGO SLEEP AND LIVE ONLY ON AIR TILL YOU COME TO OUR AID.



AFTER A FEW DAYS...

DO NOT BE AFRAID! I WILL PUT AN END TO THE OPPRESSION OF HIRANYAKASHIPU. I WILL SLAY HIM WHEN HE BEGINS TO PERSECUTE HIS OWN SON, THE HIGH-SOULED, PEACE-LOVING PRAHLAD.

THE CELESTIALS WENT AWAY CONSIDERING THE ASURAS AS ALREADY VANQUISHED.

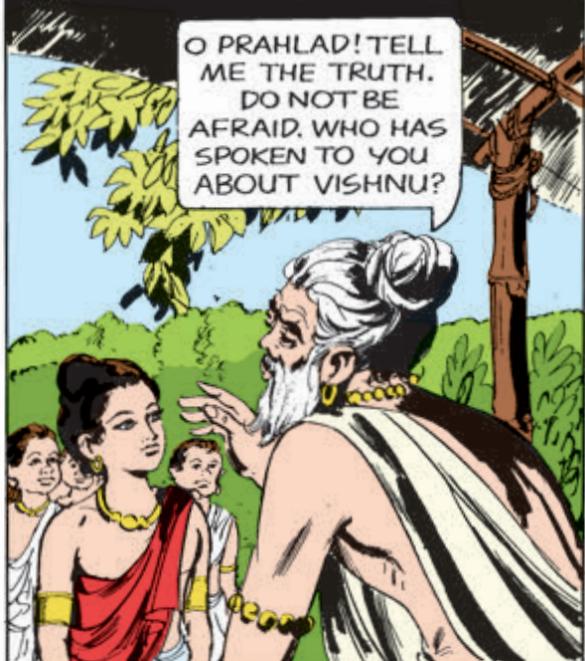
PRAHLAD IN THE MEANWHILE WAS GROWING UP AND WAS HIRANYAKASHIPU'S DELIGHT. ONE DAY—

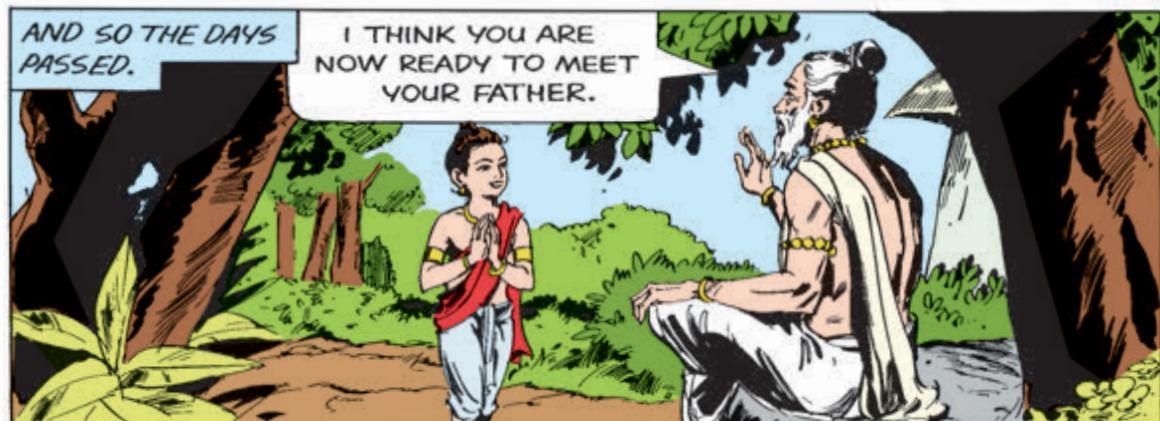
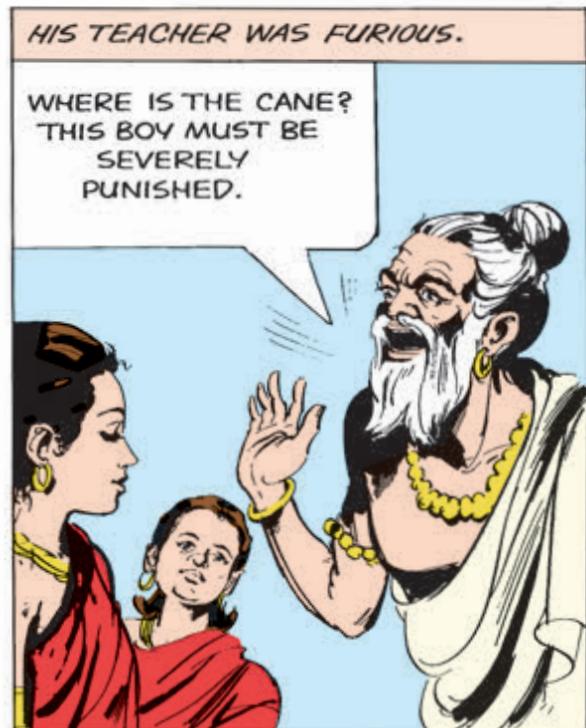


HIRANYAKASHIPU LAUGHED. THEN HE CALLED HIS SON'S TEACHER TO HIM.



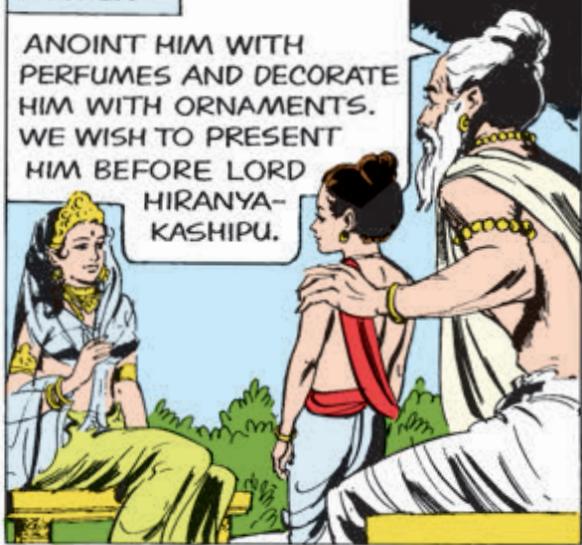
PRAHLAD WENT TO LIVE IN THE HOUSE OF HIS TEACHER.



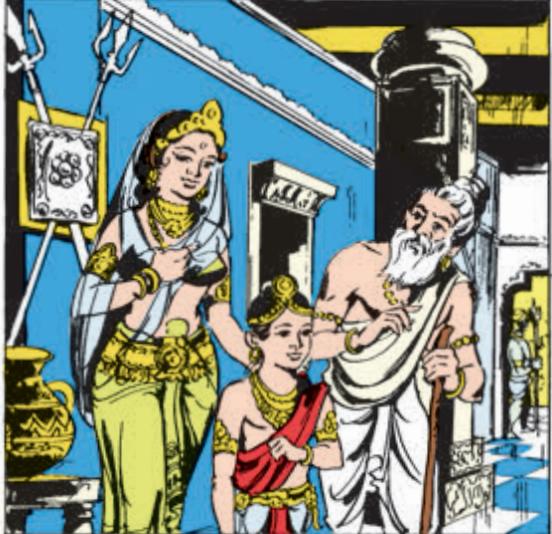


THE TEACHER THEN SENT FOR PRAHLAD'S MOTHER.

ANOINT HIM WITH
PERFUMES AND DECORATE
HIM WITH ORNAMENTS.
WE WISH TO PRESENT
HIM BEFORE LORD
HIRANYAKASHIPU.

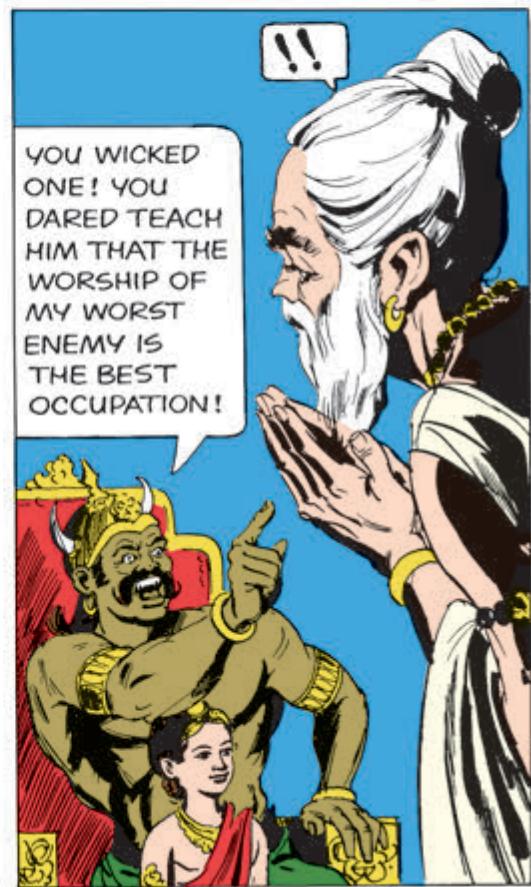


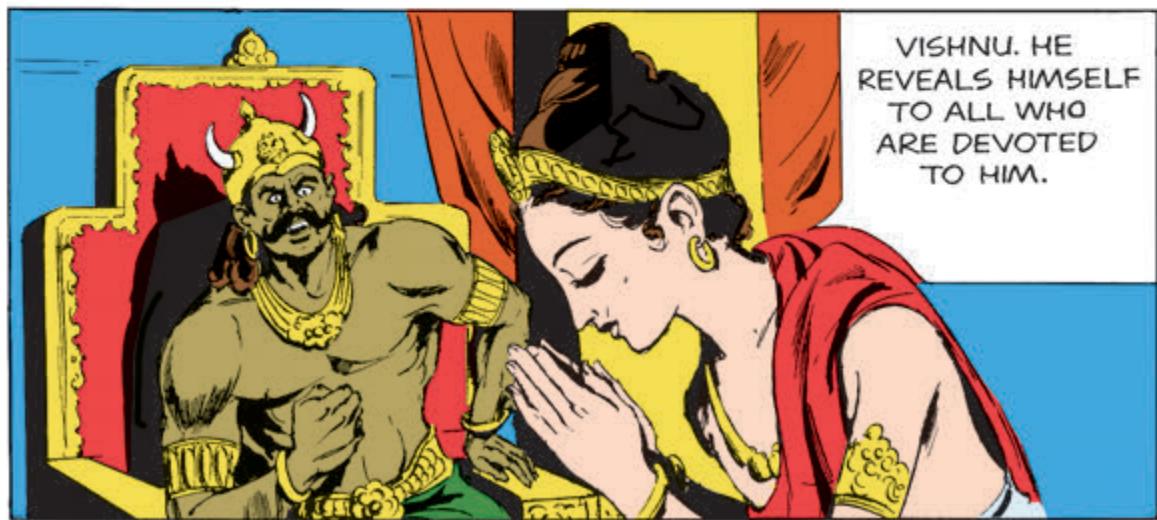
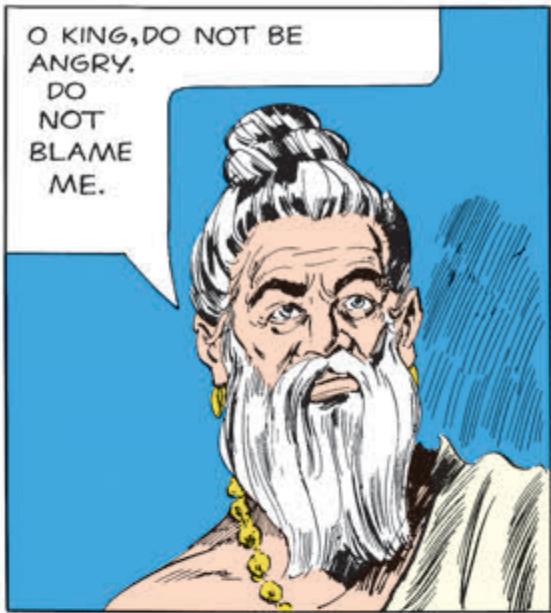
THE BEDECKED PRAHLAD WAS
THEN LED TO HIRANYAKASHIPU.



O MY SON!
MAY YOU
LIVE
LONG.





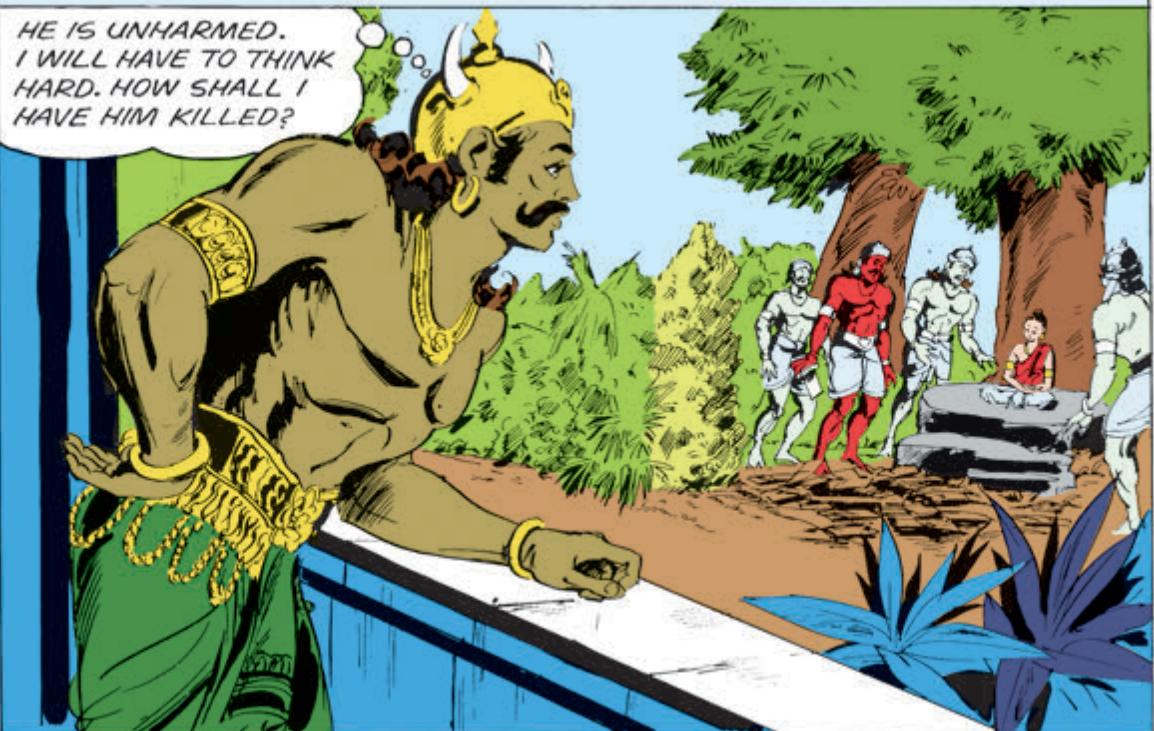




THUS COMMANDED BY HIRANYAKASHIPU, THE ASURAS BEGAN TO ATTACK PRAHLAD.



BUT THEIR STROKES WERE OF NO AVAIL FOR PRAHLAD WAS DEEPLY ENGROSSED IN HIS ADORATION OF VISHNU.



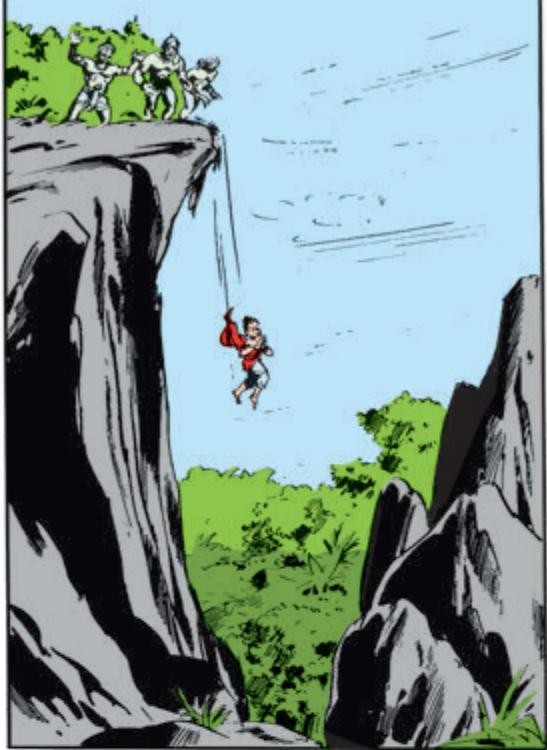
HIRANYAKASHIPU HAD THE MOST DEADLY SERPENTS BROUGHT. THEY WERE LET LOOSE ON PRAHLAD. BUT THEIR FANGS TURNED IMPOTENT.



HIRANYAKASHIPU THEN CALLED FOR MIGHTY ELEPHANTS AND MADE THEM TRAMPLE UPON PRAHLAD. BUT ONCE AGAIN IT WAS THE ELEPHANTS THAT WERE INJURED.



THEN HIRANYAKASHIPU HAD HIM PUSHED OFF A CLIFF AND...

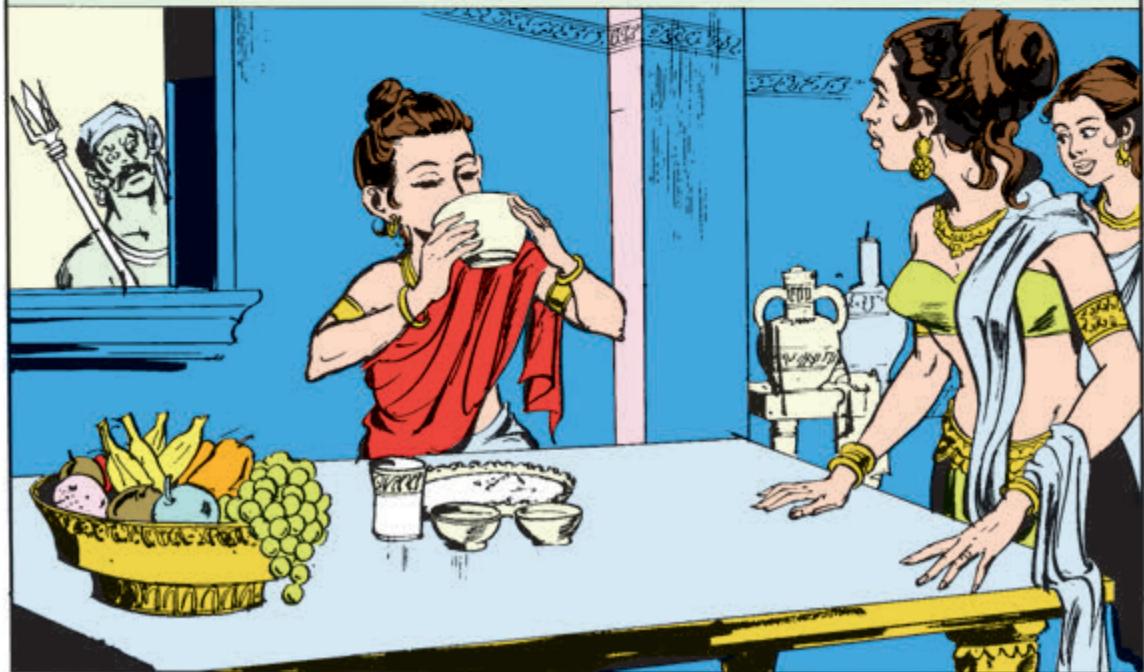


...THROWN INTO A BLAZING FIRE.



BUT NOT A HAIR ON PRAHLAD'S HEAD WAS SINGED.

IN DESPERATION HIRANYAKASHIPU HAD HIM FED WITH A DEADLY POISON BUT IT TURNED INTO NECTAR IN PRAHLAD'S MOUTH.



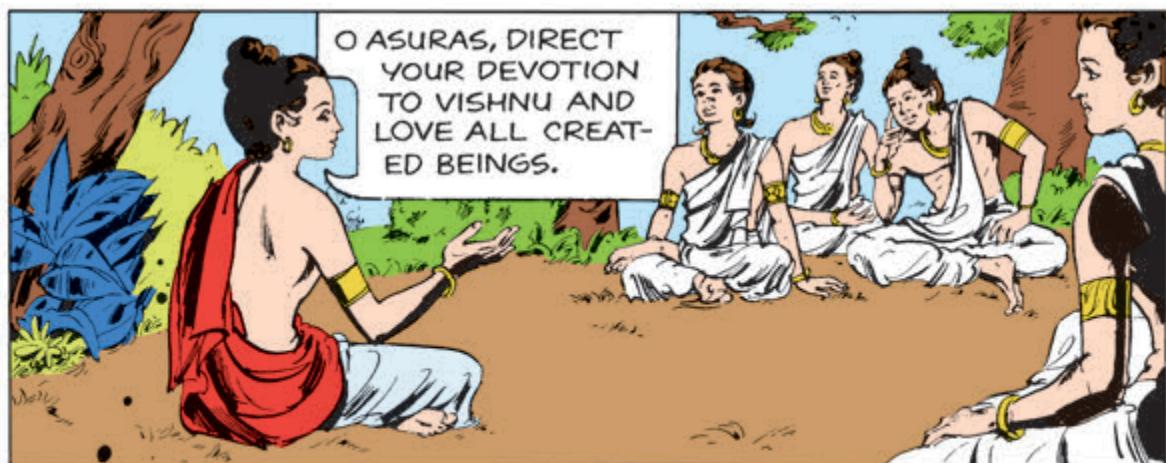
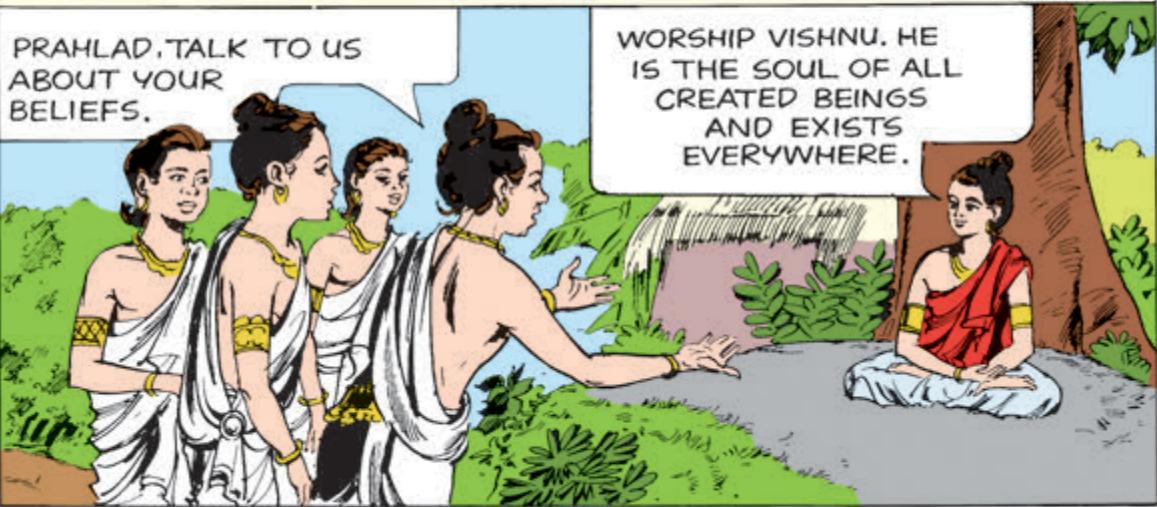


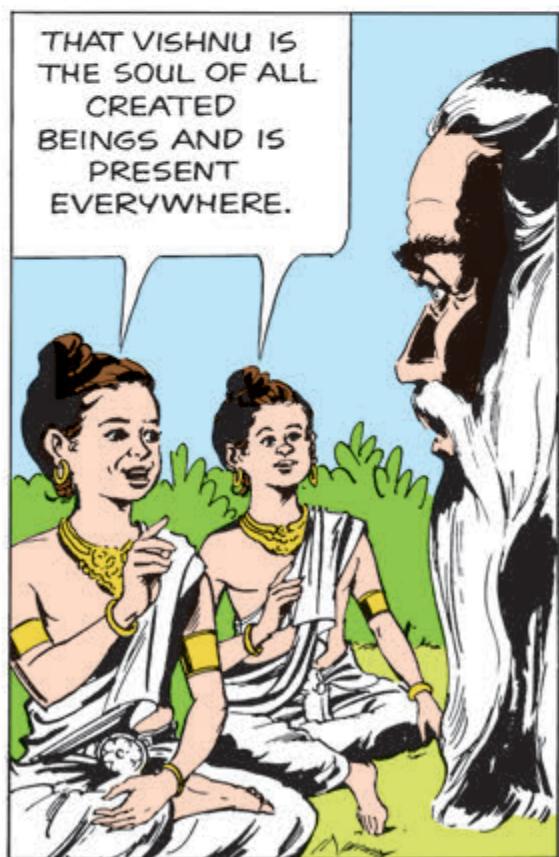
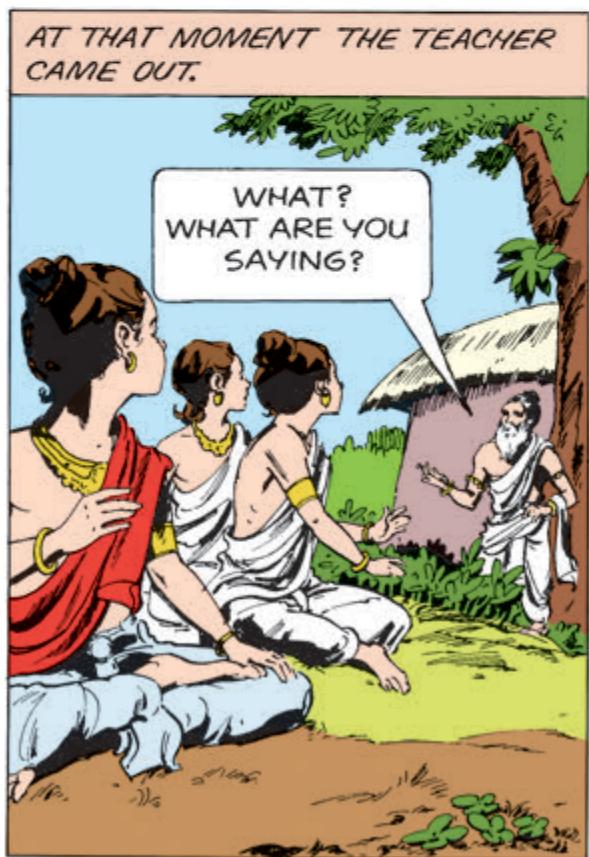
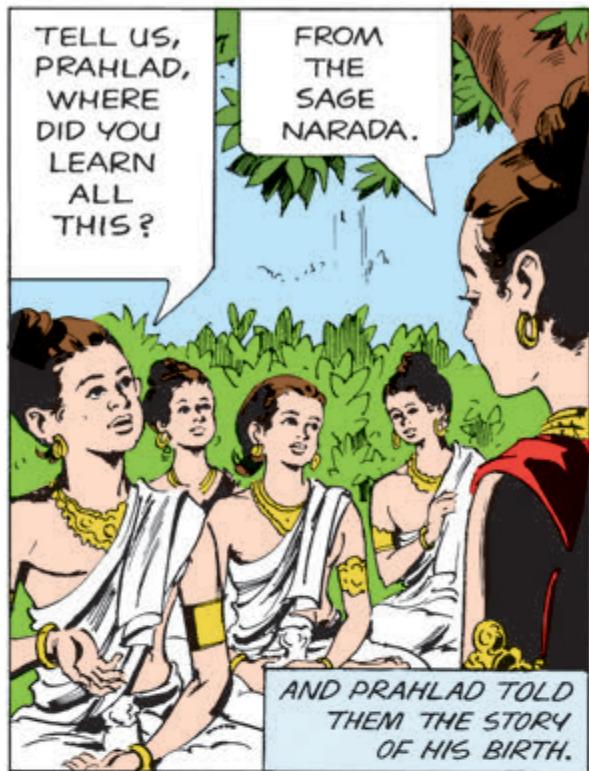
THIS TIME THE TEACHER TRIED TO GET PRAHLAD INTERESTED IN THE MEANS FOR ACQUIRING WEALTH AND PHYSICAL PLEASURES. BUT...

HOW CAN THE PURSUIT OF PHYSICAL PLEASURES AND WEALTH BRING HAPPINESS? IT WILL ONLY LEAD TO ENVY AND ANGER.



WHILE PRAHLAD WAS ENGAGED IN SUCH THOUGHTS, OTHER PUPILS CAME AND JOINED HIM.





THE TEACHER WENT STRAIGHT TO HIRANYAKASHIPU.

O LORD,
WE MUST DO
SOMETHING
BEFORE ANY
MORE
HARM IS
DONE.

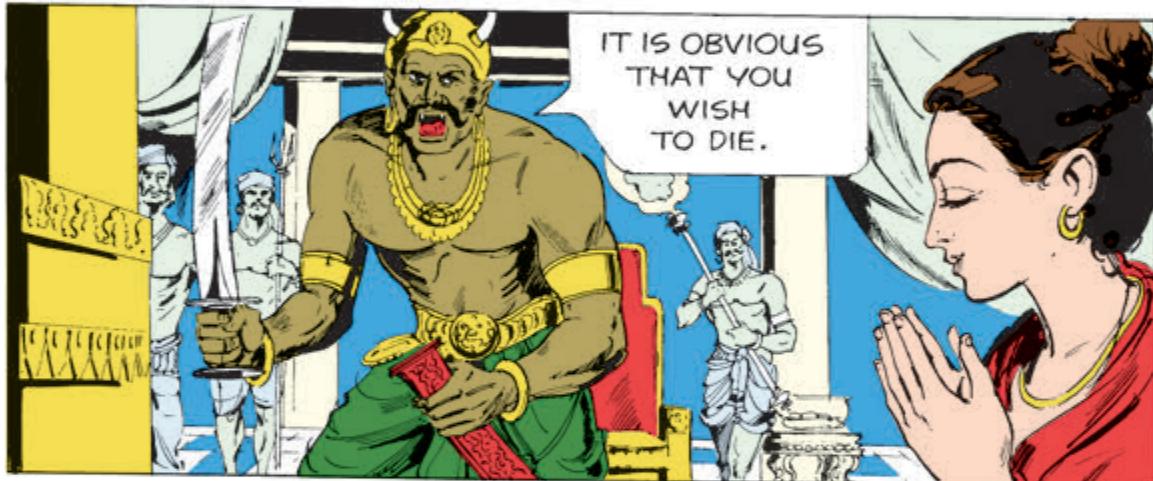
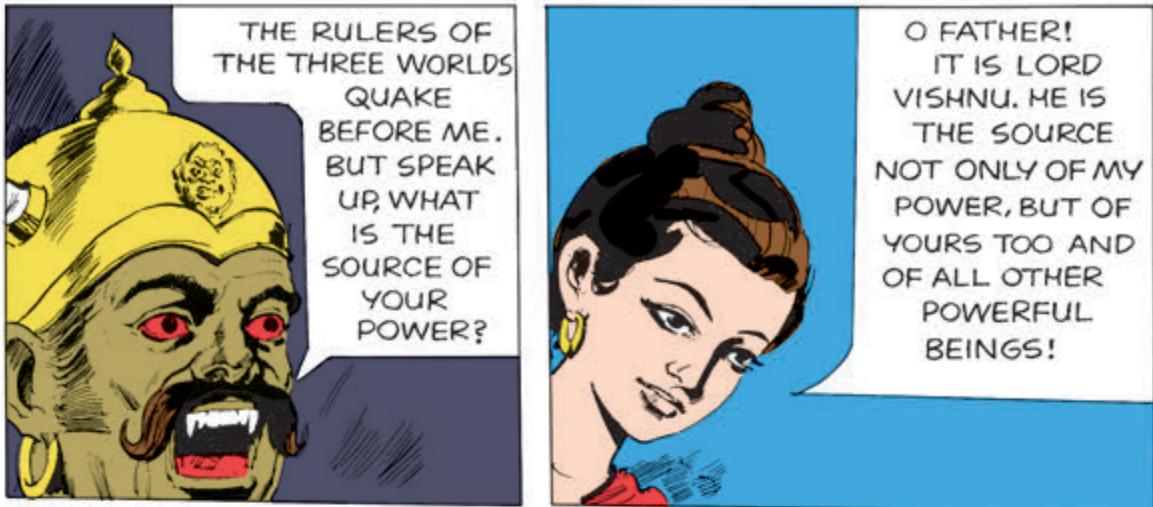


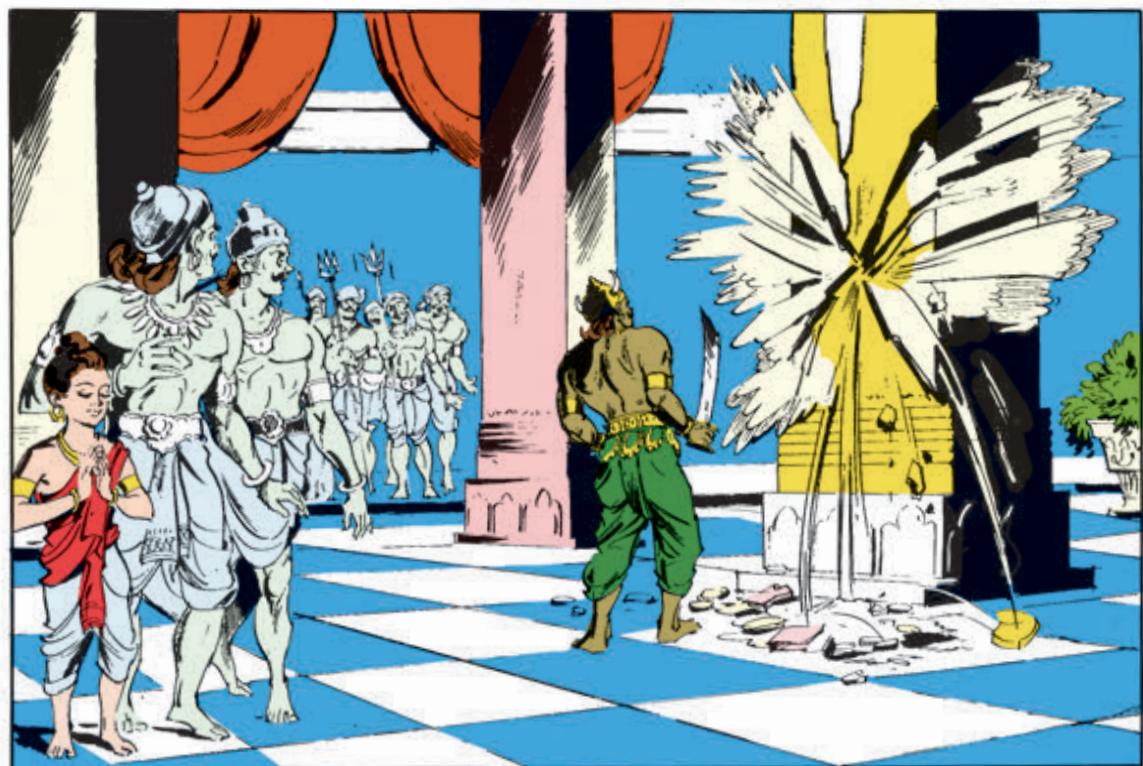
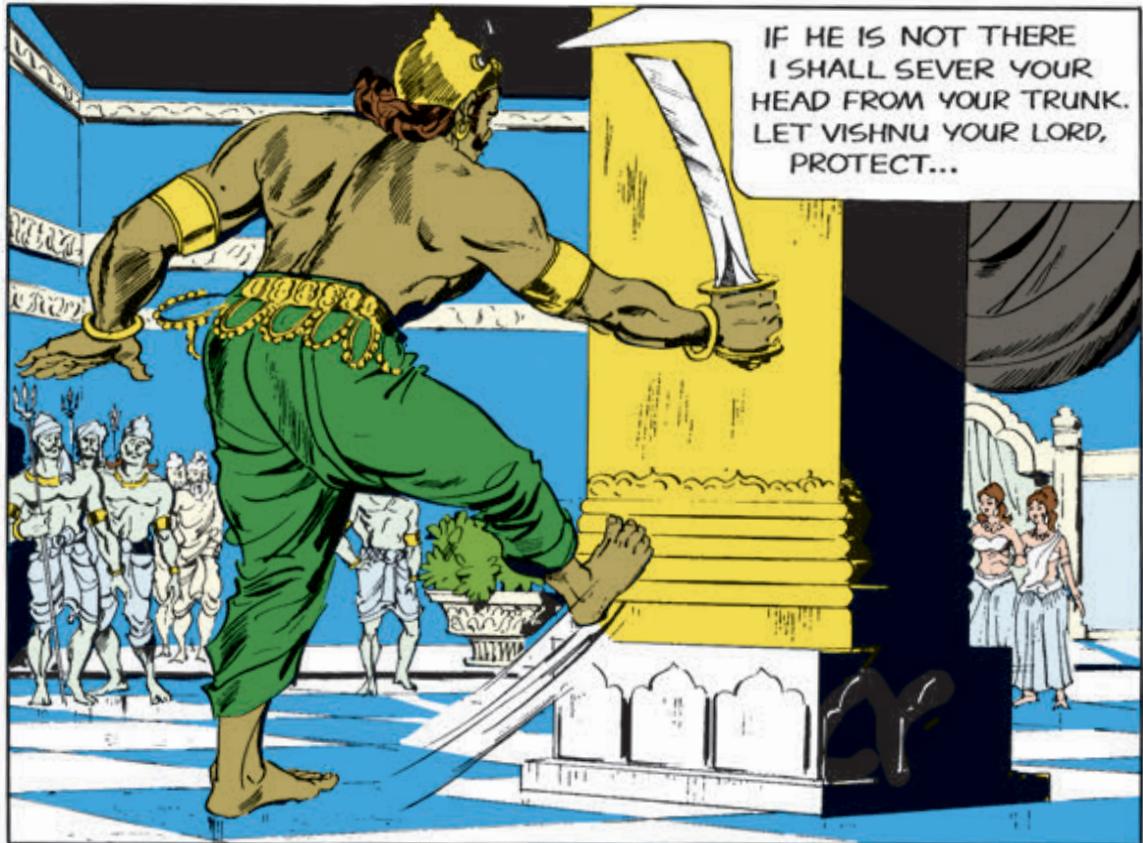
YOUR
SON IS
SPREADING
HIS
VILE
BELIEFS
AMONG
MY
PUPILS!

HIRANYAKASHIPU SENT FOR PRAHLAD.

YOU WICKED WRETCH!
ARE YOU TRYING TO
DESTROY ME
AND MY RACE?







AND LO! LORD VISHNU IN THE FORM OF *NARA-SIMHA EMERGED FROM THE PILLAR.



NARA-SIMHA CAUGHT HIRANYAKASHIPU AND...



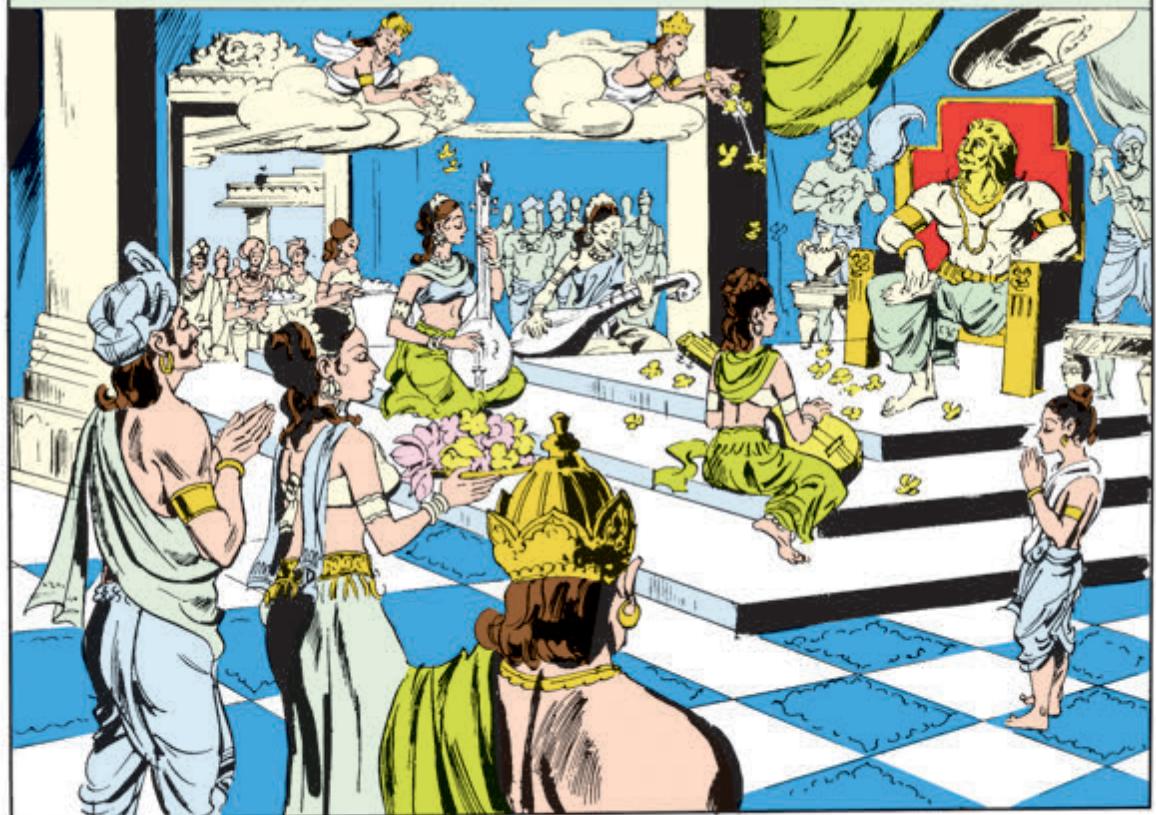
...CARRIED HIM TO THE THRESHOLD OF THE COURTROOM.



THERE HE KILLED HIM.



THEN NARA-SIMHA SEATED HIMSELF ON HIRANYAKASHIPU'S THRONE.



BRAHMA AND INDRA CAME TO PAY HOMAGE TO HIM.



BUT WERE WARY OF APPROACHING VISHNU IN THIS TERRIFYING ASPECT.



THEN BRAHMA WENT TO PRAHLAD WHO WAS STANDING NEARBY.

O SON APPROACH AND PROPITIATE THE LORD!

SO BE IT.



NARA-SIMHA WAS TOUCHED.



O GREAT PRAHLAD! I AM PLEASED WITH YOU. ASK ME ANY BOON OF YOUR CHOICE.

I HAVE ALL I DESIRE. YOU HAVE ALLOWED ME TO TAKE REFUGE IN YOU.

BUT NARA-SIMHA INSISTED.



YET I WISH TO GRANT YOU A BOON.

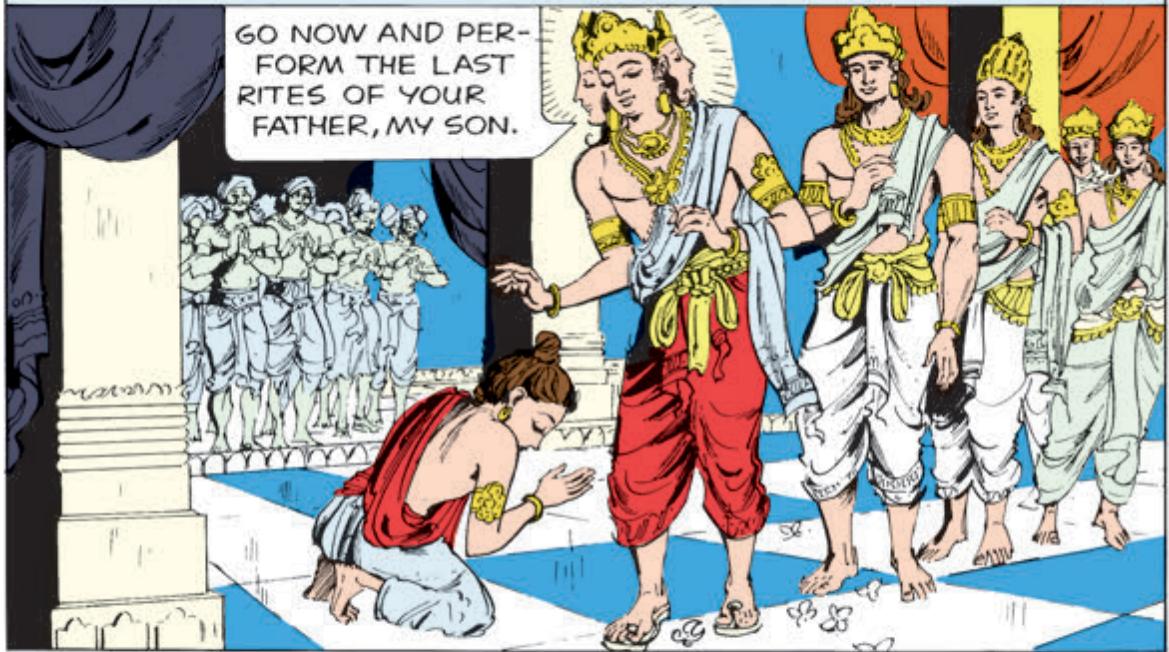
THEN LET MY FATHER BE PURIFIED OF ALL HIS SINS.

BEING YOUR FATHER HE IS ALREADY PURIFIED. REIGN IN HIS PLACE AND DO YOUR DUTIES.

SO BE IT.



NARA-SIMHA VANISHED. AND PRAHLAD BOWED TO BRAHMA AND TO THE OTHER CELESTIALS.



AFTER THE LAST RITES OF HIS FATHER WERE OVER, THE GODS WITH THE HELP OF THE ASURAS INSTALLED PRAHLAD ON THE THRONE AS LORD OF THE ASURAS. AND HE RULED WISELY AND WELL FOR MANY YEARS.



WHICH OF THE ACKS HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

EPICS AND MYTHOLOGY <i>Best known stories from the Epics and the Puranas</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abhimanyu Agastya Andhaka Aniruddha Aruni And Uttanka Ashwini Kumars Ayappan Bahubali Bhanumati Bheema And Hanuman Bheeshma Chandrahasa Dasharatha Dhrura And Ashtavakra Draupadi Drona Elephanta Gandhari Ganesha Ganesha And The Moon Ganga Garuda Ghatotkacha Hanuman Hanuman To The Rescue Harischandra Heroes Of Hampi Indra And Shachi Indra And Shibi Indra And Virtra Jagannatha Of Puri Jayadratha Kacha And Devayani Karna Kartikeya Konark Krishna Krishna And Jarasandha Krishna And Narakasura Krishna And Rukmini Krishna And Shishupala Krishna And The False Vaasudeva Kubera Kumbhakarna Mahabharata Mahiravana Nachiketa Nahusha Nala Damayanti Pareekshit Parashurama Prabhavati Pradyumna Prahlad Purushottam Dev And Padmavati Rama Ravana Humbled Saraswati Sati And Shiva Savitri Shiva Parvati Stories of Creation Subhadra Sudama Sukanya Surya Tales From The Upanishads Tales Of Arjuna Tales Of Balarama Tales Of Durga Tales Of Indra Tales Of Narada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tales Of Shiva Tales Of Vishnu Tales Of Yudhishtira Tapati Thanjavur The Churning Of The Ocean The Gita The Golden Mongoose The King In A Parrot's Body The Lord Of Lanka The Pandava Princes The Pandavas In Hiding The Parijata Tree The Sons Of Rama The Syamantaka Gem Tirupati Triputra Uloopi Vaishno Devi Vali Vishwamitra Yayati 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swami Chinmayananda Swami Pranavananda Tales Of Sai Baba Tansen Tulsidas Vidyasagar Vivekananda Zarathushtra <p style="text-align: center;">INDIAN CLASSICS <i>Enchanting tales from Indian literature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ananda Math Ancestors Of Rama Devi Choudhurani Durgesh Nandini Kadambari Kannagi Kapala Kundala Kumanan Maarthaanda Varma Malavika Manonmani Prince Jivaka Raj Singh Ratnavali Shakuntala The Adventures Of Pratapan The Elusive Kaka Udayana Urvashi Vasantasena Vasavadatta Veer Dhaval <p style="text-align: center;">VISIONARIES <i>Inspiring tales of thinkers, social reformers and nation builders</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adi Shankara Albert Einstein Anant Pai Babasaheb Ambedkar Basaveshwara Buddha Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Chanakya Chokha Mela Dayananda Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das Eknath Fa Hien Ghanshyamdas Birla Guru Arjan Guru Gobind Singh Guru Har Gobind Guru Nanak Guru Tegh Bahadur Hsiuen Tsang J.R.D Tata Jagadis Chandra Bose Jamsetji Tata Jawaharlal Nehru Jayaprakash Narayan Jim Corbett Jnaneshwar Kabir Kalidasa Lal Bahadur Shastri Lokmanya Tilak M. S. Subbulakshmi Madhvacharya Mahavira Marie And Pierre Curie Megasthenes Mirabai Mother Teresa Narayan Guru Rabindranath Tagore Ram Shastri Ramana Maharshi Ramanuja Salim Ali Shankar Dev Soordas Sri. Ramakrishna Srinivasa Ramanujan Subramania Bharati 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mouse Merchant True Friends Kanwal And Kehar Kesari The Flying Thief King Kusha Manduka <p style="text-align: center;">PANCHATANTRA TALES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crows And Owls How The Jackal Ate The Elephant The Brahmin And The Goat The Dullard The Greedy Mother-in-law The Jackal And The Wardrum Raman Of Tenali Raman The Matchless Wit Sahasramalla Sakshi Gopal Satwant Kaur Sharan Kaur Shrenik Sukhu And Dukhu Sundari Tales Of Maryada Rama The Acrobat The Adventures Of Agad Datta The Adventures Of Baddu And Chhotu The Bridegroom's Ring The Celestial Necklace The Clever Dancer The Cowherd Of Alawi The Fearless Boy The Fool's Disciples The Golden Sand The Green Demon The Unhappy Tiger The Learned Pandit The Lost Prince The Magic Grove The Miraculous Conch The Mystery Of The Missing Gift The Pandit And The Milkmaid The Pig And The Dog The Pious Cat The Priceless Gem The Prince And The Magician The Prophecy The Queen's Necklace The Rainbow Prince The Secret Of The Talking Bird The Silent Teacher The Tiger And The Woodpecker The Tiger Eater Thugsen Vidut Chora Vikramaditya's Throne <p style="text-align: center;">FABLES AND HUMOUR <i>Evergreen folktales, legends and tales of wisdom and humour</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Bag Of Gold Coins Amrapali Ander Nagari Angulimala Bikal The Terrible <p style="text-align: center;">BIRBAL STORIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birbal The Clever Birbal The Genius Birbal The Just Birbal The Wise Birbal The Witty Birbal To The Rescue The Inimitable Birbal Chandralalat Dhola And Maru Friends And Foes Gopal And The Cowherd Gopal The Jester <p style="text-align: center;">HITOPADESHA TALES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choice Of Friends How Friends Are Parted Hothal <p style="text-align: center;">JATAKA TALES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Battle Of Wits Bird Stories Deer Stories Elephant Stories Jackal Stories Monkey Stories Nandi Vishala Stories Of Courage Stories Of Wisdom Tales Of Misers The Deadly Feast The Giant And The Dwarf The Hidden Treasure The Magic Chant <p style="text-align: center;">RAVEHEARTS <i>Stirring tales of brave men and women of India</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Nation Awakes Ahilyabai Holkar Ajatashatru Akbar Amar Singh Rathor Ashoka Babur Bagh Jatin Bajirao I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baladitya And Yashodharma Balban Banda Bahadur Bappa Rawal Beni Madho And Pir Ali Bhagat Singh Bidhi Chand Bimbisara Chand Bibi Chandra Shekhar Azad Chandragupta Maurya Chennamma Of Keladi Dara Shukho And Aurangazeb Durgadas Ellora Caves Hakka And Bukka Hari Singh Nalwa Harsha Hemu Humayun Jahangir Jallianwala Bagh Kalpana Chawla Kochunni Krishnadeva Raya Kunwar Singh Lachit Barphukan Lalitaditya Mangal Pande Noor Jahan Padmini Panna And Hadi Rani Paurava And Alexander Prithviraj Chauhan Raja Bhoja Raja Raja Chola Rana Kumbha Rana Pratap Rana Sanga Rani Abbakka Rani Durgavati Rani Of Jhansi Ranji Singh Rash Bihari Bose Roopmati Sambhaji Samudra Gupta Sea Route To India Shah Jahan Shalivahana Shantala Sher Shah Shivaji Subhas Chandra Bose Sultana Razia Suriy Sen Tachcholi Othenan Tales Of Shivaji Tanaji Tenzing Norgay The Historic City Of Delhi The Rani Of Kittur Tipu Sultan Veer Hammir Veer Savarkar Velu Thampi Vikramaditya <p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY CLASSICS <i>(New Category)</i> <i>The best of modern Indian literature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Blue Umbrella
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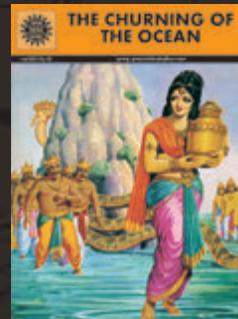
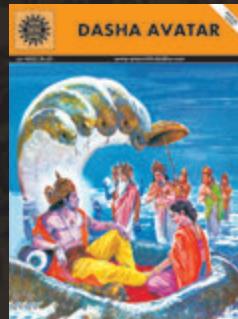
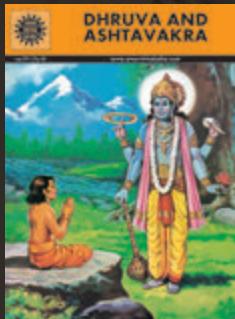


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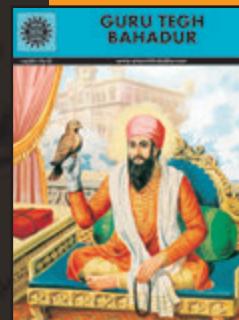
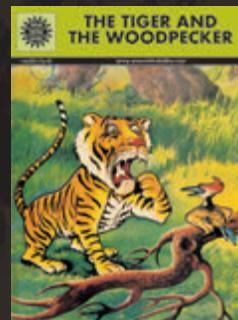
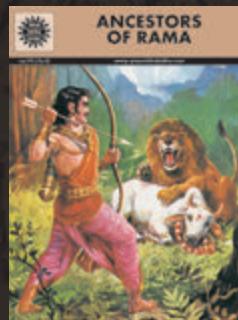
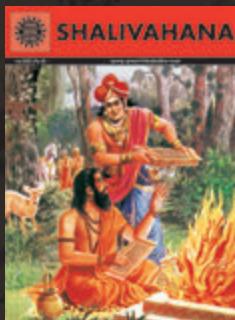
PRAHLAD

Prahlad drove his monstrous father to a murderous rage. He insisted on praising Lord Vishnu who was considered a sworn enemy by his father Hiranyakashipu. When he tried to punish his disobedient son, Hiranyakashipu's potent poisons turned to nectar while his lethal weapons fell harmlessly away. In this tale of bloodthirsty revenge, Prahlad's only defence is his devotion which dramatically puts an end to all evil.

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